

**[An abstract from the Constitution and proceedings of the Indiana Historical Society].  
[Indianapolis January 1831].**

**INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.**

On the 11th of December, 1830, a number of citizens of Indiana convened from various parts of the state at the seat of government, formed themselves into an association under the name of the "Indiana Historical Society," and adopted a constitution, from which the following articles are extracted:

" Art. 2. The objects of the Society shall be the collection and preservation of all materials, calculated to shed light on the natural, civil, and political history of Indiana, the promotion of useful knowledge, and the friendly and profitable intercourse of such citizens of the State, as are disposed to promote the aforesaid objects."

" Art. 4. The officers of the Society shall be a President, who shall preside and preserve order at all meetings of the Society; three Vice Presidents, one of whom in the order of appointment shall preside at all meetings in the absence of the President; a Corresponding Secretary, who shall be charged with all the correspondence required by the officers of the Society; a Recording Secretary, who shall record and preserve the minutes of the Society; a Treasurer, who shall receive all monies due the Society, and hold the same subject to its order, and make an annual report of all receipts and disbursements; an Executive Committee of five members, any three of whom shall constitute a quorum, whose duty it shall be to meet upon the day on which the Society holds its sessions, or as soon thereafter as practicable, to select subjects for public lectures, and the individuals by whom they shall be delivered at the annual or semi-annual meetings of the Society. It shall also be their duty to attend to the publication of such lectures and communications made to the Society as they may deem expedient, to take charge of all books, papers, specimens, models, curiosities, &c. belonging to the Society, and to submit at each annual meeting a detailed report to the inspection of the Society. They shall have power to make by-laws not inconsistent with the constitution, to direct and superintend all disbursements, and generally to carry into effect all measures not otherwise provided for."

Pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution, the following gentlemen were elected officers of the Society, viz:

Hon. Benjamin Parke, of Salem, President.

Hon Isaac Blackford, of Vincennes, 1st Vice-President.

Hon. Jesse L. Holman, of Aurora, 2d Vice-President.

Hon. James Scott, of Charlestown, 3d Vice-President.

John H. Farnham, of Salem, Corresponding Secretary.

Bethuel F Morris, of Indianapolis, Recording Secretary.

James Blake, of Indianapolis, Treasurer and Librarian.

Samuel Merrill, of Indianapolis, George H. Dunn, of Lawrenceburgh, Isaac Howk, of Charletown, James Whitcomb, of Bloomington, and John Law, of Vincennes, Executive Committee.

At the same general meeting, on motion of Judge Holman , 2d Vice President, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved* , That the Executive committee be requested to procure the delivery of lectures, or the communication of disquisitions at the annual and semi-annual meetings of the Society, on the following subjects:

1st. The history of the Indian Tribes within this state.

2dly. The civil and political history of the state from the earliest settlements.

3dly. The Ancient Remains and Natural Curiosities within the same.

4thly. On its Natural History, embracing its Geology, Mineralogy, and Botany, its soil, productions, and climate, its animals, birds, fishes, &c.

Which was adopted.

On motion of Mr. Morrison , the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved* , That the Executive committee be requested to draft and present to the General Assembly a respectful memorial, requesting the passage of a law incorporating the present society by the name of the "Indiana Historical Society," and that the gentlemen, this evening elected, be recommended to be named in the contemplated act of incorporation as the first officers of said Society; that said

memorial respectfully request the General Assembly to remember the said Society in the annual distribution of the laws, journals, and public documents of this state, and that the Secretary of State be authorised to deliver to said Society two boxes of books, now in the Department of State, addressed to the Historical Society

On Saturday evening, the 18th inst., the Executive Committee of the Historical Society assembled at the Chamber of the Supreme Judges: present, Samuel Merrill, George H. Dunn, Isaac Howk, James Whitcomb and John Law, also the three Vice-Presidents, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer.

Mr. Merrill was appointed chairman, and Mr. Dunn secretary of the committee.

On motion of Mr. Law, the following resolution was adopted: Resolved , That the President of this Society be requested to deliver, at the semi-annual meeting in May next, a Discourse on the Civil and Political History of the State, from its earliest settlement.

On motion of Mr. Whitcomb, Resolved , That the Corresponding Secretary address communications, accompanied by a copy of the Constitution and the names of the officers of the Society, to the different Historical Societies in the United States, and also to some of the most distinguished friends of science in this and our sister states, soliciting such aid, information, and occasional communications as they may be disposed to furnish, in furtherance of the important objects of this Society.

*Resolved* , That the Corresponding Secretary address our Senators and Representatives, enclosing a copy of the Constitution and of such act of incorporation as may be obtained, and solicit such patronage from the General Government as it is customary for it to bestow on similar societies.

*Resolved* , That the Corresponding Secretary be further instructed to communicate a copy of the Constitution of the Society to the Executive Department of the several States and Territories, soliciting from the respective state governments and Territories, a copy of their respective Codes and public documents, and such aid and patronage as it has been customary for them to give similar societies.

*Resolved* , That the Executive committee in conjunction with the officers of the society will act as a committee to receive donations to the society and deposits of such curiosities, books, manuscripts, &c. upon such terms as the owners of such articles shall think proper to annex thereto.

The following is the act of incorporation passed by the General Assembly of Indiana:

**AN ACT to incorporate the Indiana Historical Society, approved January 10, 1831.**

Sec. 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana*, That Benjamin Parke, John H. Farnham, Bethuel F. Morris, and James Blake, with their associates, are hereby created and constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name and style of "The Indiana Historical Society," and by such name may have perpetual succession, hold, purchase, receive, enjoy, and transfer any property real and personal, have and use a common seal, sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, defend and be defended in all courts of judicature.

Sec. 2. There shall be an annual meeting of the members of said Society at the time and place appointed by their Constitution, at which time and place the officers of said Society named in said Constitution, shall be elected, who shall continue in office until the next annual meeting, and until their successors are elected. The members of said Society at such meeting may alter and amend their Constitution, change the time of the annual meeting, and frame such laws for the government of said Society as they shall think proper, the same not being inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this State.

Sec. 3. The officers of said Society may make such rules for their own government and for carrying into effect the objects of the Society, not inconsistent with its Constitution, as they shall think proper, all which, together with their receipts and disbursements, shall be reported to the annual meeting of the Society.

Sec. 4. The Secretary of State shall deliver to the officers of said Society one copy of the Laws of this State, and one copy of the Journals of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, which may hereafter be published, and also copies of the Laws and Journals of former years, where more than five copies of the same for any one year remain in his office. The Secretary shall also deliver to the officers of said Society all books and other articles, which may have been or may hereafter be transmitted to his office for the use of said Society.

N. B. The place of residence of the Corresponding Secretary, is Salem, Washington county, Indiana, to whom all communications may be made; except Books or Deposits, which may be forwarded to the Librarian at Indianapolis.

**CIRCULAR.**

INDIANAPOLIS, JANUARY 1831.

*MY DEAR SIR:*

The preceding abstract from the Constitution and proceedings of the "Indiana Historical Society," exhibits an index of its character, and will, it is hoped, attract your favorable regard. In pursuance of the general objects of the Society, and in obedience to its resolutions, the Corresponding Secretary has the honor to address you, respectfully soliciting such aid, information, and patronage, as it may be in your power to afford. All communications, addressed to the undersigned at Salem, Washington county, Indiana, will be gratefully received, and, whenever necessary, promptly acknowledged.

I have the honor to remain, With sentiments of respect, Your ob't. servant, John H. Farnham Corr.  
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Salmon P. Chase Esq. Counsellor at Law Cincinnati Ohio.

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J. H. Farnham Corr. Sec. of Indianapolis Ind. His. Soc. Jan ,1831